

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-24 remain in the application. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 15-17, 24 have been amended.

In item 1 on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the drawings are objected to because in Fig. 1, the section line should be labeled "2" or "II" instead of "A."

Applicant submits new Figs. 1 and 2, which replace the originally filed Figs. 1 and 2. Fig. 1 has been corrected by labeling the section line "II." Fig. 2 has also been corrected by changing the label "A-A" to "II-II."

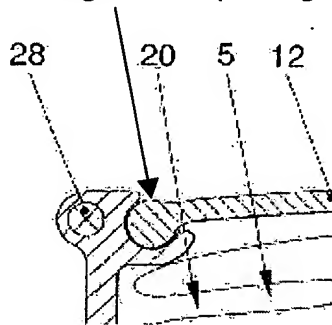
In item 2 on page 2 of the Office action, the drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a).

More specifically, the Examiner stated that the drawings must show the feature of a cover that is releasably latched to the edge of the outlet opening as defined in claim 20 or the feature must be deleted from the claims.

The feature of a cover 10 that is releasably latched to the edge of the airbag outlet opening 9 is shown in Figs. 2 and 3. Figs. 2 and 3 show that the edges of the cover 10 are latched in grooves along the edge of the airbag outlet opening 9. In

Figs. 2 and 3, the edge of the cover 10 that is latched in the groove along the airbag outlet opening looks, when viewed in cross-section, like a ball and socket type connection, which is illustrated below.

cover 10 is releasably latched in the groove along the edge region of the airbag outlet opening 9



The Examiner stated that the drawings must show the feature of an airbag module 2 installed near a windshield. Applicant submits a new Fig. 1 that has been corrected in order to show a windshield. The windshield is only schematically shown and thus no new matter has been entered.

The figures now show all the features specified in the claims and thus the application meets the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a).

In item 3 on page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner requested corrected drawings. Applicant submits new Figs. 1 and 2 which replace the originally filed Figs. 1 and 2.

In item 4 on page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner listed corrections for pages 24, 25, 29, and 30 of the specification. The specification has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

In item 5 on page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner rejected claim 20 as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

More specifically, the Examiner stated that the specification fails to describe the structure of a cover that is releasably latched to the edge of the outlet opening. The Examiner asked what kind of releasable latch is used, how the cover opens, and whether the cover is hinged.

In the specification, on page 20, line 16 to page 21, line 2, it is described that the cover 10 can be pivotably connected to the edge region of the airbag outlet opening 9 or the cover 10 can be releasably latched to the edge region of the airbag outlet opening 9.

Figs. 2 and 3 show how the cover 10 is releasably latched to the edge of the airbag outlet opening 9. Figs. 2 and 3 show that the edges of the cover 10 are held in a groove along the

edge of the airbag outlet opening 9 such that a hinge connection is provided.

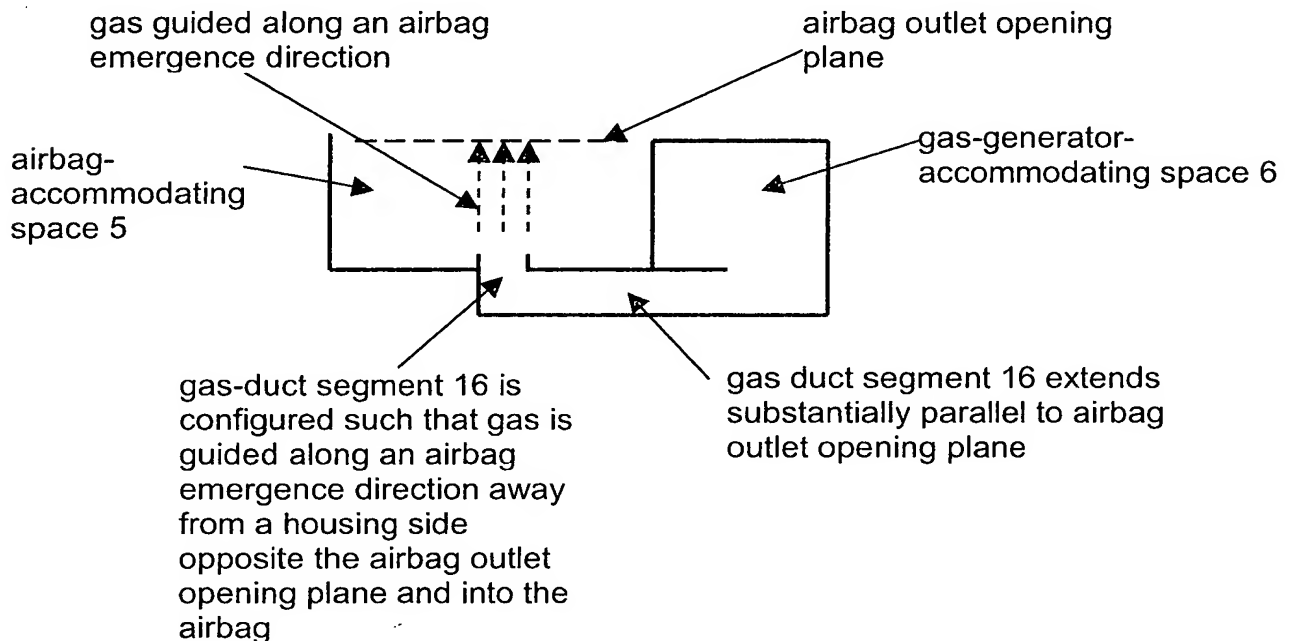
The specification, on page 26, lines 6-15, describes how the cover 10 opens. There it is described that the cover 10 is preferably pivotably connected to the edge region of the airbag outlet opening 9. The cover 10 has a central predetermined tear-open line 11 so that, in the event of the airbag inflating, the cover 10 tears open along the predetermined tear-open line 11 and forms two flap parts 12, 13. These two flap parts 12, 13 then pivot about the coupling points located on the edge of the airbag outlet opening 9, in order to open up the airbag outlet opening 9.

The subject matter of claim 20 is thus sufficiently disclosed in the present application and therefore the application meets the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

In item 6 on page 3 of the Office action, claims 1-24 are rejected as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner pointed out that in claim 1, line 30, "said upper housing wall" lacks proper antecedent basis. Claim 1 has been amended to provide a proper antecedent basis.

The Examiner stated that lines 34-47 of claim 1 contradict lines 39-41 of claim 1. Applicant is of the opinion that the objected to language is not contradictory and no changes are necessary. Figs. 2 and 3 show that the gas duct segment 16 extents substantially parallel to the airbag outlet opening plane and that the gas duct segment 16 is configured such that gas is guided along an airbag emergence direction. The simplified drawing below illustrates that lines 34-37 and lines 39-41 of claim 1 are not contradictory.



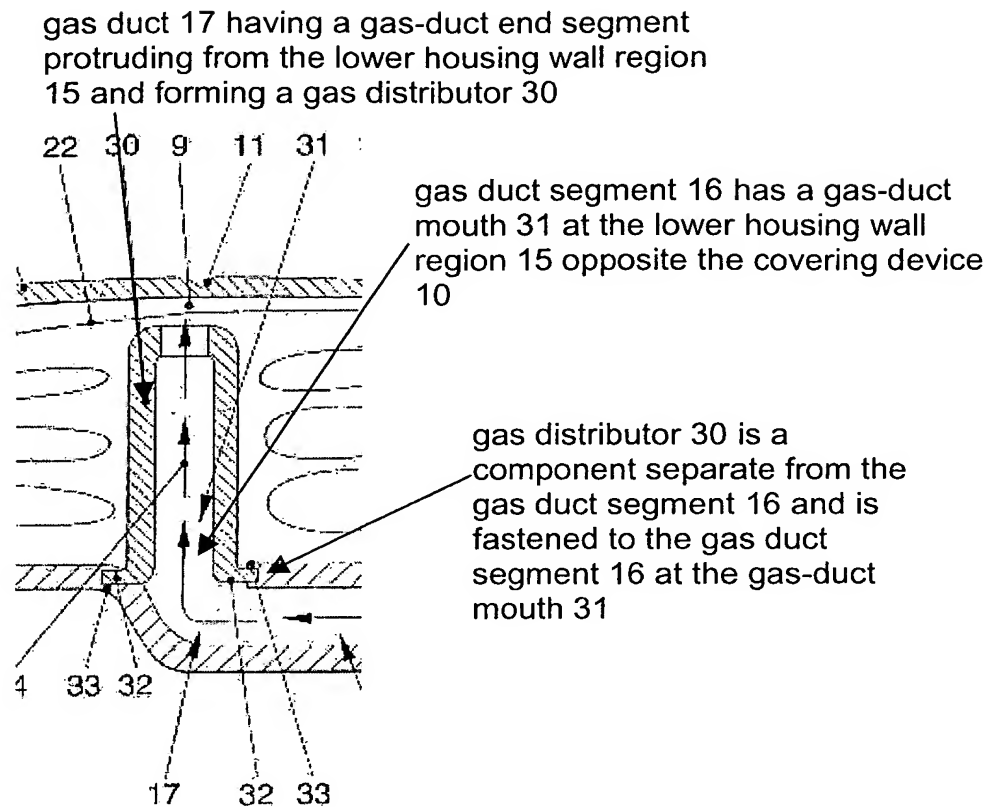
The Examiner stated that in claim 3, line 5, "end side" is indefinite. "End side" has been changed to "end" in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion.

The Examiner objected to "said gas-duct segment" in claim 5 as being indefinite. Claim 5 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion by defining that the gas-duct

segment 16 extends substantially parallel to the outlet opening plane.

The Examiner objected to "said gas-duct segment" in claim 7, line 4 as being indefinite because more than one such segment has been introduced. No correction is believed to be necessary because the claim language is consistent. The gas duct segment 16 in claim 7, line 4 refers to the gas duct segment 16 in claim 1. The "gas duct end segment" of the gas duct 17 that forms the gas distributor 18; 30 is different from the "gas duct segment" 16.

The Examiner further objected to "is a separate component" and "fastened at" in claim 7 as being indefinite. Claim 7 has been amended in order to clarify that the gas distributor 30 and the gas duct segment 16 are components that are formed separate from one another and are fastened to one another at the gas duct mouth 31. Fig. 3 illustrates what is defined in claim 7. A portion of Fig. 3 is shown below.



The Examiner rejected claim 9 as being indefinite because it recites an improper Markush group. Claim 9 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

Claim 10 has also been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions by deleting the objected to language.

In claims 15, 16, and 17, the objected to "end side" has been changed to "side."

Claim 24 has been amended in the same manner as claim 1 in order to provide a proper antecedent basis for "said upper housing wall."

It is accordingly believed that the specification and the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraph. The above noted changes to the claims are provided solely for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112. The changes are neither provided for overcoming the prior art nor do they narrow the scope of the claims for any reason related to the statutory requirements for a patent.

In item 7 on page 4 of the Office action, the Examiner stated that claims 1-19 and 21-24 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Applicant's above arguments together with the changes in the claims, specification, and drawings are sufficient to overcome the rejections and objections under 37 CFR § 1.83(a) and 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraph.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 1 or 24. Claims 1 and 24 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

Appl. No. 10/727,752
Amndt. dated August 16, 2004
Reply to Office action of June 7, 2004

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of
claims 1-24 are solicited.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of
Allowance be issued in this case.

Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to
Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and
Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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MB:cgm

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